

GENERAL

Stop signs are often requested for a number of reasons such as:

- restricted sight distances
- speeding
- too many accidents
- unusual traffic patterns
- high volumes of traffic

MYTHS

Before discussing the guidelines for installing stop signs, we should first mention some of the myths about their use:

1. Stop signs are not effective in controlling excess speeding and can even increase traffic speeds. Studies have shown that most people will at least slow down for a stop sign, but after slowing or stopping, they will often accelerate to a higher speed than if the stop sign were not there. This additional acceleration causes additional noise, wear and tear on vehicles, longer trip times, greater gas consumption and increased driver frustration. In addition, vehicles on the street with the right-of-way will tend to go faster than before because they know the side-street traffic is supposed to stop. Traffic volumes on the through street may also increase, which might possibly cause additional problems at adjacent intersections.

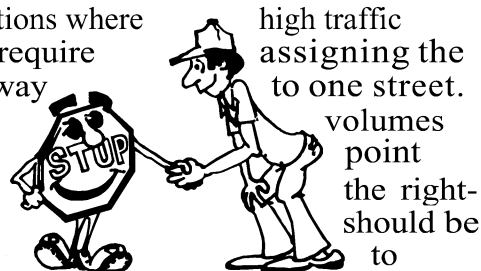
2. Stop signs do not always reduce accidents. Usually they will help reduce the number and severity of right-angle accidents but other types of accidents may actually increase. Often, accidents are caused by some other feature, such as a sight obstruction, which can be removed to provide enough sight distance to react and avoid a collision.

3. The installation of a stop sign will not guarantee motorist compliance. In fact, if motorists think the stop sign is unreasonable, they will begin to lose respect for its meaning. This disrespect can carry over to other stop signs and devices that are needed. For example, if a stop sign is installed at a low-volume residential intersection with adequate sight distance, many motorists will question its need and begin to ignore it.

WHERE CAN STOP SIGNS HELP?

Stop signs can be useful in helping solve or reduce traffic problems or potential traffic problems of several different kinds. Cases where stop signs can help are:

1. At locations where volumes require right-of-way assigning the to one street. When reach the where of-way assigned



one street, intersection efficiency will increase and driver frustration will decrease after the installation of stop signs.

2. At locations where the sight distance is severely restricted by buildings, raised yards, etc. , stop signs can be installed to assign right-of-way and reduce the potential hazard caused by motorists not having enough time to observe and react to each other as they approach the intersection. Sight obstructions such as limbs, bushes, shrubs and fences can be removed in order to provide adequate sight distance and thereby eliminate the need for stop signs.

3. At locations that have experienced an abnormally high number of right-angle accidents or other type of accidents that might possibly be prevented by stop signs.

4. At locations where one street is a through street (higher volumes and through traffic), stop signs can help assign that street the right-of-way and control all minor streets that intersect it.

5. At locations where traffic signals are needed, multi-way stop signs can be installed as an interim measure.

6. At locations where unusual geometrics, traffic patterns or lane configurations require the installation of stop signs to assign right-of-way and/or avoid driver confusion.

CRITERIA

In order to evaluate fairly and effectively the need for stop signs, Traffic Engineering uses a set of objective guidelines. They are based on (1) traffic volumes, (2) through streets, (3) sight distances, and (4) accident experience. In addition to these factors, the Traffic Engineering personnel use engineering judgment to evaluate other factors that might be related. When these factors are all obtained and tabulated, each location can be compared to the established guidelines to determine if a stop sign will solve a problem or if some other less restrictive solution, such as removal of a sight obstruction, will solve the problem.

If you should see a damaged or missing sign, or a malfunctioning signal, call the Traffic Engineering Maintenance Shop at 268-4029.

Published by:
City of Wichita
Public Works Department
Traffic Engineering

TRAFFIC ENGINEERING'S

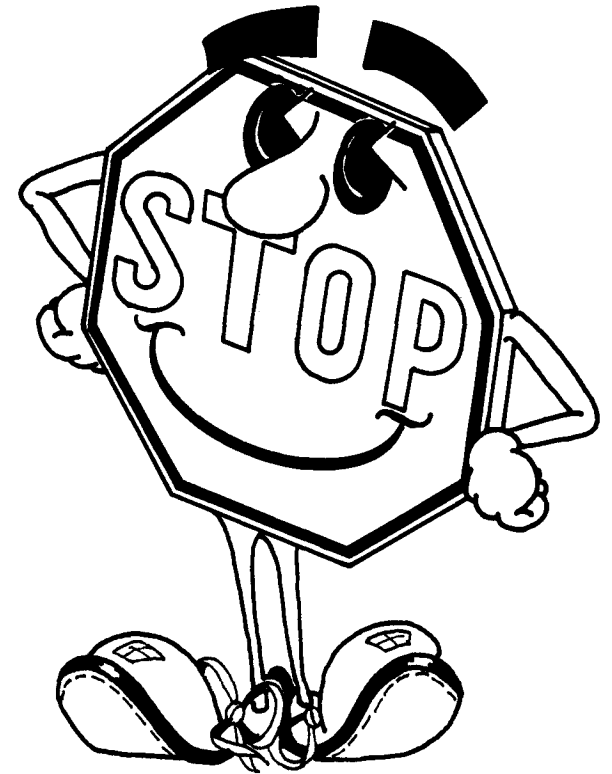
overall objective is the safe and efficient movement of people and goods throughout the city. Accomplishing this objective includes the installation and maintenance of modern traffic control systems; longer lasting and more effective pavement markings; visibly greater and more effective traffic signing. The staff of Traffic Engineering is available to serve you for additional information: call 268-4446.

If you feel your request has been improperly handled by the Traffic Engineering staff, you may appeal their decision to the Wichita Traffic Commission.

THE WICHITA TRAFFIC COMMISSION consists of seven local citizens appointed by the City Council who:

- are non-partisan
- serve without compensation
- study matters pertaining to traffic and make recommendations to the City Council
- carry out programs of publicity and education pertaining to traffic and traffic regulations
- provide a sounding board for citizen suggestions regarding traffic conditions

Stop Signs



WILL THEY SOLVE MY PROBLEM?